



Experiential Learning of Cultural Norms: The Role of Implicit and Explicit Aptitudes

DATE 20 February 2023 (Monday)

TIME 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm (Hong Kong Time)
(GMT 7:00 am - 8:30 am)

MODE Online

SPEAKER:



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Prof. Krishna Savani is a Professor of Management at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. He has previously worked at Columbia University, National University of Singapore, and Nanyang Technological University. He has three inter-related programs of research. One program uses cross-cultural research to uncover basic psychological constructs (e.g., the choice mindset, the universal mindset) and examines the implications of these constructs for individuals, organizations, and society. His second program uses knowledge of people's decision-making biases to counteract discrimination in employees' hiring, evaluation, and promotion. His final program uses machine learning methods to generate novel hypotheses, which are subsequently tested with experiments.

Prof. Savani's research has received numerous awards, including the 2021 Responsible Research in Management award by the Academy of Management Fellows, and the 2016 Rising Star award from the Association of Psychological Science. He was featured among the 2018 "Top 40 Business Professors Under 40" by Poets and Quants. He is a Fellow of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, the Association for Psychological Science, and the Society for Experimental Social Psychology. He has served as an Associate Editor at the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

Abstract

Newcomers to a culture typically learn its interpersonal norms through trial-and-error experience. Some people learn foreign norms quickly, whereas others take more time. Given that the culturally correct response often depends on conditions that are subtle and complex, we propose that newcomers' rate of acculturation depends on not only their explicit aptitude (e.g., IQ) but also their implicit aptitude (e.g., pattern recognition ability). In Studies 1–3, participants read about a range of influence situations sourced from a foreign culture. Across many trials, they decided whether or not to comply and then received accuracy feedback (based on what a majority of locals indicated to be the appropriate action in each situation). Across the three studies, participants with higher implicit aptitude were faster at learning from trial-and-error experience, whereas those with higher explicit aptitude were not. In Studies 4–6, participants experienced a range of greeting situations from a foreign culture. Across many trials, implicit aptitude predicted experiential learning, especially under conditions that impede reasoning: multiple cues, subliminal feedback, or inconsistent feedback. Study 7 found that the predictiveness of implicit aptitude was weaker under a condition that impedes associative processing: delayed feedback. These findings highlight the important role of implicit aptitude in helping people learn interpersonal norms from trial-and-error experience, particularly because in real-life intercultural interactions, the relevant cues are often complex, and the feedback is often fleeting and inconsistent but immediate.

- In addition to discussing this research, Prof. Savani will also share his experience as an outgoing Associate Editor at the *Journal of Personality and Psychology: Attitudes and Social Cognition*.



Online registration:

<http://bit.ly/3DNNU6N>

Registrants will be notified of the online seminar link by email